

# Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education

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Volume 6

Article 2

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10-1-1994

## For Openers: Comings and Goings

Editorial Board

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### Recommended Citation

Editorial Board (1994) "For Openers: Comings and Goings," *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*: Vol. 6, Article 2.  
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/conversations/vol6/iss1/2>

## FOR OPENERS

### Comings and Goings

This past spring John W. Padberg, S.J., completed his term (plus an additional year) as the first chair of the National Seminar on Jesuit Higher Education and founding editor of this journal. It would be difficult to imagine someone more suited than was Fr. Padberg to the task of initiating and sustaining a nationwide conversation on the past, present and future of Jesuit higher education in the United States. A member of the Society of Jesus for fifty years, director of the Institute of Jesuit Sources at Saint Louis University, and a world-renowned authority on the history of the Jesuits and Jesuit education, he brought to each meeting of the Seminar and to each issue of *Conversations* a world of learning. A gifted organizer and leader, he created an atmosphere in which each member of a diverse group of people from across the country was a full participant in the lively discussions through which this publication takes shape. We shall miss his wisdom, his wit, his inimitable anecdotes, his managerial skill, and his editorial eye—not to mention his taste in restaurants.

We shall also miss his prodigious energy. Two people have been asked to divide the tasks that Fr. Padberg has discharged so ably during the past four years. We are delighted to welcome back an alumnus of the Seminar, Vincent T. O'Keefe, S.J., as the new chair. Former president of Fordham University, former general assistant and vicar general of the Society of Jesus, Fr. O'Keefe was a founding member of the National Seminar (1990-92). He is at present superior of America House in New York City. With this issue of *Conversations*, I begin a three-year term as editor. When I was invited to join the Seminar in 1992, I looked upon it as an opportunity to come to some understanding of what David O'Brien in this issue of *Conversations* calls the "problems and possibilities" of Jesuit higher education. Thanks to Fr. Padberg and to my colleagues on the Seminar, past and present, I have found the experience rich beyond my expectations. I am pleased to have been offered a chance to stay active in the discussion a while longer.

As always in the fall, we bid farewell to members of the Seminar whose terms are expir-

ing, and welcome new people on board. Gerald McKeivitt, S.J., of Santa Clara, and Eileen Poiani, of St. Peter's College, have moved on to emeritus status. We owe each of them a large debt of thanks. We also welcome three new members. Thomas Buckley, S.J., teaches history at Loyola Marymount University. A specialist in United States history, Fr. Buckley writes most frequently about religious and social issues in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Kathleen Orange is Associate Professor of political science at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, where she teaches political philosophy and directs the Foley Community Service Program. Dr. Orange also oversees Spring Hill's exchange program with the Universidad Rafael Landivar, the Jesuit University in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Richard Passon, Provost and Academic Vice President at the University of Scranton, holds a Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Notre Dame, and is particularly interested in eighteenth-century British satire and satiric theory. "The relationship between expertise in satire and a subsequent career in academic administration," he comments, "should be (ironically) clear."

It is no exaggeration to say that none of this coming and going could have been carried out successfully without the constant and ever-gracious presence of Martin O'Keefe, S.J. Fr. O'Keefe has agreed to stay on as Secretary to the Seminar. We are sincerely grateful to him for his generosity.

We hope that you will find this issue of *Conversations* challenging and thought provoking. In response to helpful comments we received at our April meeting at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, we are experimenting with a slightly new format. Four respondents, chosen to reflect a range of viewpoints on the larger topic opened up by David O'Brien, have initiated a conversation on the problems and possibilities of Catholic university education. Let us know what you think.

—Brennan O'Donnell  
Editor